

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposition 50, Chapter 8 Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Grant

PIN	5358	COUNTY	Riverside
APPLICANT	Riverside, City of	AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$253,000
PROJECT TITLE	Middle Santa Ana Watershed Management Plan	TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$339,985

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In partnership with Riverside County Parks and Open Space District, Riverside Land Conservancy, Tri-County Conservation League, Riverside Co. Flood Control District, Riverside Public Works, and the County of San Bernardino, the City of Riverside seeks state funds to develop a regional watershed plan for the Santa Ana River, located in Southern California. No such plan exists for the middle reach of the river, creating an urgent need to coordinate water management efforts in this region. While the objectives of the proposed plan will be established during the planning process, the City and its partners envision that they will include: (1) restoration of native habitat and ecosystem functioning; (2) wildlife conservation; (3) water quality issues such as TMDL development and NPS management; (4) water supply issues such as storage and conservation and (5) recreational opportunities. The proposed planning effort would begin in January, 2006 and end in November, 2007.

WORK PLAN - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has a detailed and specific work plan that adequately documents the proposal. Weighting factor is 3.

Score: 6

Comment: The proposal addresses the necessary components that will generate an IRWMP; however, the work plan does not address the mechanisms to formulate it. The proposal does not clearly identify achievable and deliverable work items in the work plan. Work items identified in the proposal are general objectives without any quantitative or qualitative documentation. The work schedule is clear, but sometimes the budget does not correspond well to the work schedule. The proposal does not demonstrate how it will integrate existing plans or planning efforts. The proposed work schedule extends beyond the January 2, 2008 completion deadline. Note: IRWMP will not be adopted until November 2007, but that fact did not enter into scoring decisions

DESCRIPTION OF REGION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented a detailed and specific description that adequately documents the region. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 2

Comment: The proposal does not clearly identify why the region is an appropriate area, the boundaries of member agencies, location of major water related infrastructure, major land-use divisions, the quantity and quality of the water supply in the region, or identify the region's demand. Although the proposal identifies environmental concerns facing the region, it does not describe important ecological processes and environmental resources within the regional boundaries and the associated water demands to support environmental needs. The proposal does not clearly demonstrate the benefits of why a regional planning effort is warranted. The accompanied mapping provides some political boundaries and hydrological reaches. No maps or lists of agencies involved or projects proposed have been provided. Portions of this region are included in the IRWMP proposed for the Upper Santa Ana River (PIN #3884). This region is not included in SAWPA planning or in the San Jacinto Watershed.

OBJECTIVES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific planning objectives. Weighting factor is 2.

Score: 4

Comment: Although somewhat vague, the objectives are identified. The proposal does not identify how they have been developed and how it will address major water-related objectives and conflicts that will affect the available water supply, groundwater management, ecosystem restoration, and water quality. Misses a key water quality issue: salts.

INTEGRATION OF WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented how water management strategies will be integrated. Weighting factor is 2.

Score: 4

Comment: The applicant will determine water management strategies to be used following identification of objectives. The proposal identifies potential water management strategies that may be used, but is not specific about what strategies will be integrated, and is vague about how they will be integrated (e.g., "through some sort of agreement"). There are no strategies to address major water related objectives at this time.

IMPLEMENTATION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately detailed plan implementation. Weighting factor is 2.

Score: 2

Comment: A watershed management council or JPA is proposed to guide IRWMP implementation, as could "other agencies" (not otherwise identified) who could implement portions of the IRWMP. No schedule beyond completion of the IRWMP is provided. No discussion of monitoring performance of IRWMP implementation is provided. For the NPS component of the IRWMP, the applicant does not identify appropriate management measures and practices and implementation responsibilities and schedule. Note: Specifics of implementing TMDL objectives have not been developed yet.

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IMPACTS AND BENEFITS - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately presented and documented the impacts and benefits of the Plan. Weighting factor is 2.

Score: 2

Comment: The proposal is vague and short on specific impacts and benefits of the IRWMP, beyond recognizing the need to avoid duplicative planning efforts by individual groups and the benefit of a forum for watershed information exchange and collaboration. The applicant recognizes that projects identified for implementation by the IRWMP will require CEQA compliance and that selection of the CEQA lead agency would depend on the governance structure of the group created to implement the IRWMP. The City of Riverside is identified as a potential CEQA lead.

DATA AND TECHNICAL ANALYSIS - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific data and technical analysis components of the proposal. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 2

Comment: The proposal lacks specificity. The applicant does not expect IRWMP development to include extensive technical studies, but will rather rely on past, current, and future planned (but not described) studies, and acknowledges that as the IRWMP is developed the need for additional studies and data will be determined. The grant sought at this time does not include funding for "additional analysis", and recognizes that the IRWMP will need to identify resources for these studies.

DATA MANAGEMENT - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific data management procedures. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 2

Comment: While short on details, the proposal cites the City of Riverside as possessing a GIS data management and distribution capacity sufficient to support a project of this magnitude.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented stakeholder involvement concerns. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 3

Comment: The proposal minimally discusses the consensus-based stakeholder involvement and decision process that will be used. The applicant mentions that the stakeholder group overseeing development of the IRWMP will determine its own governance, e.g., JPA, council, etc. Concerns of stakeholders are not separately shown or described, and it is not clear how the interests of all the stakeholders will be met by the proposed planning effort. The proposal lists a broad range of public agencies as stakeholders. Environmental justice is not well addressed.

DISADVANTAGE COMMUNITIES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented disadvantaged community concerns. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 1

Comment: The proposal states that this is "not applicable" without further explanation. The proposal does not indicate if DACs will be included in the planning or if and how it will provide direct benefits to those communities. The data finder for the 2000 census shows that the MHI for the congressional district listed in the application is less than the statewide MHI.

RELATION TO LOCAL PLANNING - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented the Plan's relationship to local planning efforts. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 2

Comment: The proposal lists four existing plans that will serve to direct this IRWMP. Three of the specific plans listed cover a limited range of issues - multiple species habitat conservation, city master plan, parks and open space. It is not apparent from the proposal whether the geographic scope of the above-listed plans addresses the entire project region. One plan is listed that does apparently cover the project region and it is broadly described as providing a "conceptual framework" from, which specific planning actions can be developed. How these planning documents will be combined into an IRWMP is not described in detail. The formation of these plans into an umbrella IRWMP is briefly discussed.

AGENCY COORDINATION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented agency coordination issues. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 2

Comment: The proposal states that the applicant will coordinate with relevant local, state and federal agencies, and other local watershed partner's stakeholders through facilitated meetings and other forums. The extent to which the IRWMP process will facilitate agency coordination is not addressed, although two examples of the City of Riverside's coordination with stakeholders on specific projects are given. How coordination with local land use planning decision makers will work is not clear or directly addressed. The proposal indicates that it will exploit opportunities to encourage participation but does provide details on the mechanism to facilitate that coordination.

TOTAL SCORE: 32